Snowmobiling in Saskatchewan:

A Study of the Groomed Trail System and Trail Permit Program in Saskatchewan

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PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS

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Executive Summary

Over the past several years, the Province of Saskatchewan together with the snowmobilers in the Province, have been developing a groomed Trail System throughout the Province. The objectives of the Trail System are to provide a safe and enjoyable recreational snowmobiling experience for Saskatchewan residents and tourists alike. The snowmobilers of the Province have organized some 86 clubs throughout the Province and have formed a Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association (SSA) as a provincial body to provide centralized administration, support and to lobby on behalf of the clubs.

In 1998 the Province amended *The Snowmobile Act*, which made it mandatory to possess a valid trail permit in order to ride SSA designated groomed trails on highway right of ways and private land in the Province. Revenues raised from the permit program were designed to establish a Trail Fund to provide funding for the cost of developing and maintaining the groomed Trail System.

The Trail System and permit program are intended to be a self-sustaining user pay system. All of the stakeholders are committed to this principle.

While this is only the second year of the mandatory permit program, there are a number of issues confronting the trail and permit systems. This study was commissioned to review these issues and to make recommendations to address the issues identified.

Currently Saskatchewan has nearly 9,000 kms of groomed trail throughout the Province being groomed and maintained by 48 individual clubs. Additionally, the Province has some 690 kms of snowmobile trail within the Provincial Parks, which are presently groomed and maintained by Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM). Currently, SERM does not participate in the Trail Fund.

The Trail Fund is administered through a Trail Fund Committee comprised of the president (or designate) and treasurer of the SSA and 4 zone representatives. All are volunteers. The Committee developed and implemented a 13-point scoring system for each club to guide the allocation of the Trail Fund revenues. The Trail Fund Committee oversees this process.

At present, there are a number of levels of stakeholders involved in the administration and maintenance of the Trail System in the Province. Local clubs plan their own activities and manage their local budget and provide the actual grooming on all trails other than within Provincial Parks. SERM administers the

portion of the Trail System inside the parks, the SSA and the Trail Fund Committee plays an oversight role in administering the Trail Fund. However, there is presently a lack of formal coordination and planning at the overall Trail System level.

The mandatory permit program is yet in its infancy. The sale of permits has increased in the second year over the first (1999/00 – 4,272 season permits compared to 6,325 for 2000/01). However, overall awareness and compliance is still quite low. The total permit revenues raised represent approximately 24% of the total cost of maintaining the Trail System. This situation has placed a financial strain on all clubs and the association, as they must provide their own fundraising to cover the remainder of the costs.

A well maintained, appropriately signed and marked Trail System is important to maintaining the safety levels and positive snowmobiling experience for recreational snowmobiling and for creating a destination attraction for non-resident winter tourists. There are presently a number of challenges regarding both the costs of maintaining the present Trail System and the funding received through the Trail Permit Program.

These challenges include increasing the compliance with the mandatory permit program, thereby increasing permit sales and further increases in revenue through permit pricing considerations. Additional challenges exist regarding controlling the costs of maintaining the trail system throughout the Province.

The body of this report sets out a current situational analysis and the recommendations section sets out detailed suggestions focused on the key issues identified. A summary of recommendations is as follows:

1. Local clubs and the SSA should continue to work closely with local enforcement officials to promote public awareness and increase the visibility of enforcement for the purpose of compliance.

2. The number of permit vendors should be increased through networking at the local club and association level.

3. The price of the trail permit be increased for the 2002/03 season and that the SSA consider a two-tiered pricing model to promote purchase of the permits early in the season.

4. Consideration should be given to making accommodations to have designated trails within Provincial Parks and on Crown lands included in the *Snowmobile Act* and requiring a valid Trail Permit for use.

5. The existing trail system should be stratified into primary and secondary trails within the system.

6. An overall strategic plan be developed for the Trail System and that an "umbrella" body be designed to have responsibility for this strategic plan. A mechanism should be established to ensure "buy-in" to the plan by all clubs and other significant stakeholders.

7. There should be increased coordination between clubs and with SERM to ensure maximum utilization of the grooming equipment within the entire Trail System.

Introduction

In recent years, the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association, in concert with the Government of Saskatchewan has implemented a snowmobile Trail Permit Program. The initial intent of the Trail Permit Program was to move towards the development and maintenance of a self-sustainable groomed snowmobile Trail System in Saskatchewan. Currently, there are a number of issues regarding the Trail System and the permit program.

Among the issues that the Trail System faces are:

a) Acceptance, compliance and enforcement of the Trail Permit System
b) Insufficient funding in the short term
c) Development and maintenance structure of the Trail System
d) Strategic planning in the Province
e) Administrative structure of the Trail Fund

When the current Trail Permit System for SSA designated groomed trail on highway right of ways and private land became mandatory under *The Snowmobile Act* in the 1999/00 season a new issue emerged. Awareness and compliance of the new system by the recreational snowmobiler became an issue. For years snowmobiling in Saskatchewan has been relatively unregulated. Now a trail permit is required to ride on the SSA designated groomed Trail System. Compliance with this new regulation becomes another challenge to the snowmobiling industry. During 2001, there were approximately 17,730 registered snowmobiles in the Province of Saskatchewan. During the 2000/01 snowmobiling season there were 6,325 seasonal trail permits sold. The SSA and local clubs must continue to increase public awareness of the permit system and work with local enforcement officials to increase compliance.

During the 2000/01 snowmobile season, the costs of development and maintenance for trails groomed by the snowmobile clubs amounted to $888,435. During the same period the revenues generated by permit sales amounted to approximately $216,000 or roughly only 24% of the total cost. The balance of the expenses must be paid through the local fundraising efforts of the individual clubs. In order to develop a sustainable user-pay system, clearly revenues must be increased and expenses controlled or curtailed.

The issues with respect to development and maintenance of the Trail System are similar to the administration of the trail fund. The development and maintenance is delivered through a somewhat fragmented system which lacks central coordination. clubs rely mostly on volunteer labour to sign and groom the approximately 9000 km of trail under their control. Another approximately 690 kms of trail is signed and groomed by SERM within the Provincial Parks.

The future direction and development of the Trail System within the province is an issue as well. Currently, development is somewhat ad hoc with input coming from the local clubs, the Trail Fund Committee, and the SSA. However, there is no overall strategic plan for the snowmobile trail system in the Province which would coordinate and prioritize future development.

The current overall Trail System is administered by a number of groups. The clubs manage at a local level, the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association (SSA) at a provincial level, the Trail Fund Committee oversees funding to the clubs, and presently Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM) administers the system within the Provincial Parks.

Terms of Reference

The purpose of this study is to review the issues surrounding the development and maintenance of a sustainable groomed snowmobile Trail System in Saskatchewan and provide recommendations on how to resolve these issues. The study focuses on the issues surrounding the existing Trail Permit Program and the current administrative and delivery structure of the program, the goals and objectives of the program, and the viability of the existing system.

Methodology

In accordance with the terms of reference set out above, we have conducted a situational analysis through interviews with stakeholder groups including the SSA, SERM, Tourism Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Economic & Cooperative Development, and local snowmobile clubs. As well, discussions were held with other Provincial snowmobile associations including Manitoba, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. Discussions were also held with other stakeholders including hotel,

accommodation and beverage room owners. In addition, a detailed search and review of information available on the Internet regarding these and other jurisdictions was conducted.

Detailed discussions were held with a representative sample of ten snowmobile clubs from throughout the province to ensure that recommendations would address issues at the club level. A detailed list of questions were developed and discussed with each club to ensure the consistency of the information gathering. Each of the individual club responses have been kept confidential. However the responses were tabulated to form general opinions and views representative of the group. The responses received were consistent with responses from other stakeholder groups. All stakeholders were considered during the recommendation process.

History

Snowmobiling in Saskatchewan has a long history that begins almost fifty years ago with the introduction of the first one and two passenger snowmobiles. As snowmobiles increased in popularity the Trail System in Saskatchewan developed on a regional basis. Pockets of Trail Systems were developed by snowmobile clubs throughout the province, particularly in the East Central area of the province around Greenwater Lake Provincial Park.

As interest in the sport increased so did the informal Trail System being developed. As these trails became more travelled, snowmobile clubs began buying groomers to maintain the Trail System. By grooming trails, snowmobilers found that accidents were reduced and travel became easier.

By 1971 the Provincial snowmobile clubs banded together to form the Saskatchewan Snowmobiling Association (SSA). This Association was formed to assist the clubs with providing education and lobbying power for the recreational snowmobilers in the Province. Similarly, all the Provinces and Territories now have Provincial associations as well as a National organization, the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations.

Volunteers and local clubs have been crucial throughout the development of the Trail System. Not only have they acted as the vehicle for the development and maintenance of local trails, but they have also raised all the funds necessary to carry on this work. In 1999/00, the clubs raised in excess of $470,000 to keep the trail network functioning (see Appendix 2). Volunteer hours are critical for running the groomers that maintain the network of groomed trails in the Province. The majority of clubs groom their portion of the trail with volunteer hours. This volunteer time is spent operating groomers, putting up signage, cleaning trail, drilling ice, and fundraising.

In 1991, the SSA commissioned Delcan Western Ltd. to study a proposed Trail System that would connect Duck Mountain Provincial Park to Meadow Lake Provincial Park. This would provide a link from Manitoba on the East to Alberta on the West. The study was to look at the proposed route to determine the economic and environmental impact that the trail would have. In addition, the study included an implementation strategy that addressed the cost and funding aspects of building such a trail.

Delcan found that there was significant enough interest from the snowmobiling community to support an East to West Trail System. Today, the Northern route suggested in the report closely resembles the Trans-Canada Snowmobile Trail (Appendix 1). On the financial side of the recommendations, Delcan suggested that a Trail Permit Program, like the permit program existing in Ontario at the time, be instituted in Saskatchewan to fund the Trail System. It was from this report that the current Trail Permit System evolved.

The first year that the SSA implemented a voluntary Trail Permit System, in which snowmobilers were encouraged to purchase permits to help fund the Trail System, was the 1993/94 season. Permits continued to be voluntary until the 1999/00 season when changes to *The Snowmobile Act* of Saskatchewan made trail permits mandatory for travel on SSA designated groomed trails on highway right of ways and private land.

Through the first two years of mandatory permit requirements, the trail permit program experienced significant growth in permit sales. However, revenues generated from permit sales are still significantly below the level required to fund the 9000 km trail system in the Province.

The balance of this report focuses on the issues facing the Trail System and Permit Program within the Province.

Compliance

The goal of the permit system was to create a more equitable user pay system in which the snowmobilers that ride the trails would fund the costs of developing and maintaining the trails. Prior to the permits, fundraising by the local clubs financed the Trail System. Because clubs have variable levels of membership and support, this created financial inequities between the clubs and as result inequities in the quality of the trails maintained. The clubs felt that if the riders purchased a permit, that the funds raised from permit sales should be distributed back to the clubs to finance the maintenance of the trails to a level of standard consistency throughout the Province.

The mandatory trail permit system is still relatively new in Saskatchewan, the 2000/01 season being only the second season of mandatory permits. The growth in permit sales has been significant and consistent with the initial experience of other jurisdictions. In 1999/00 there were 4,272 annual permits sold with an increase in the 2000/01 season to 6,325 (SSA) a 48% increase year over year.

The total level of snowmobile registrations over the 2000/01 season with Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) was 17,730 in February 2001. The "take-up" rate for registered snowmobiles is about 36%. This "take-up" may be an inexact measure of compliance as it is difficult to account for the number of snowmobiles not registered and the number of people who do not require a permit since they utilize the Trail System for an exempt reason (trappers and hunters). If all of the registered snowmobiles in the Province had purchased a permit the costs of maintaining the Trail System could be financed. Thereby achieving the user pay objective.

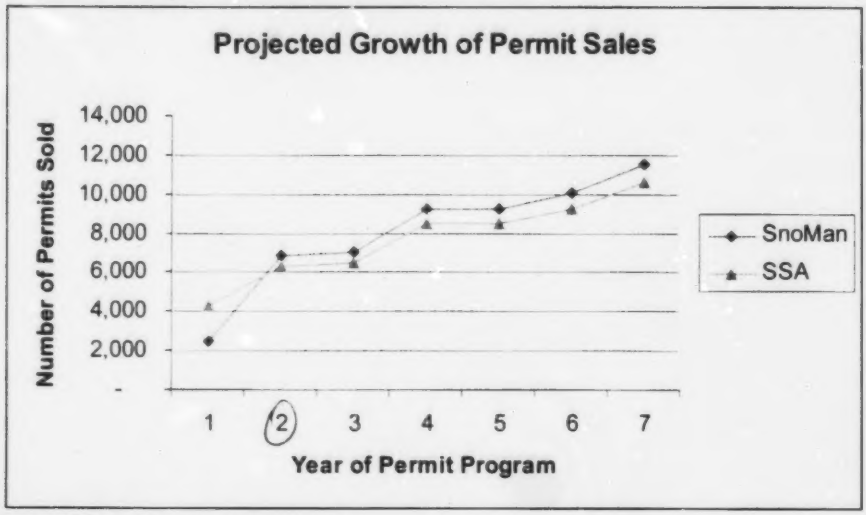
A study conducted by the Canadian Tourism Commission indicated that approximately 5% of Canadian residents own snowmobiles. Based on this information the number of snowmobiles in the Province could be as many as 50,000. The SSA has approximated that 20% of snowmobilers utilize the trails

for purposes other than recreation such as hunters and trappers. Factoring this information in, the approximate "take-up" rate may only be 14%.

The information suggests that non-compliance within the current system is still very high. This non-compliance jeopardizes the self-sustainability the Trail Permit System is intended to develop for the riders.

Saskatchewan is currently in year 2 of the mandatory permit system. So far, the permit sales experience in Saskatchewan has very closely matched the experience of the Manitoba Snowmobile Association (SnoMan) when it launched its mandatory permit program seven years ago. If the growth of permit sales continues to follow the SnoMan pattern then in the next 3 to 5 years the SSA should expect growth to take permit sales to just over the 10,000 mark (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Projected Growth of Permit Sales



Source: SSA and Manitoba Conservation

The cornerstone of a long term, self-sustaining, user pay system, is that all users of the system must contribute to the costs of maintaining the system.

One of the most significant detractions from the current permit system is the fragmented process for compliance. In order to comply with *The Snowmobile Act* a groomed trail rider requires a registered snowmobile. The license or registration is available at all SGI vendors (the license only includes $200,000 of mandatory third party liability insurance). The snowmobile owner is also likely to buy property or accident insurance which is not included in basic the registration insurance (and not available through SGI). Thirdly, the snowmobiler must have a trail permit for SSA designated trails which is only available through a limited

number of vendors. Having to search out perhaps three different vendors is extremely inconvenient for the snowmobiler and detracts from voluntary compliance.

Experience in other jurisdictions would indicate that the extent of the distribution system and therefore the availability of trail permits has a significant impact on overall compliance. The distribution system for purchase of trail permits is currently the responsibility of the local clubs. Permits are available from clubs directly or from vendors that have been arranged by the local clubs. According to the SSA website, there are presently 213 locations in the province that sell trail permits.

Certainly public awareness plays an important part in building compliance and acceptance of the permit system. The SSA and local clubs must be active in educating the general public. As public awareness grows permit sales will also grow.

During the 1999/00 season, Saskatchewan had some 9,000 kms of groomed trail, 213 permit vendors and sold 4,275 seasonal permits. Manitoba, by contrast, had some 10,000 kms of trail but approximately 350 vendors and sold 12,000 permits.

It would be much more convenient if permits were available at a greater number of vendors. For instance, if trail permits were made available at SGI vendors then snowmobile owners would have the option of purchasing their trail permit at the same time as they register their snowmobile.

Compliance amongst snowmobile club members is fairly well established, as can be seen in Exhibit 2, it is non-club members that need to be reached. 86% of clubs sold at least as many permits as members. The marginal deficiencies in some clubs does not necessarily represent non-compliance as permits are required for each machine and clubs may have family members that do not necessarily each own a snowmobile. Additionally, clubs such as the Border Explorers have members who hold SnoMan permits in Manitoba. There is currently a reciprocal agreement between Saskatchewan and Manitoba to allow permit holders from either Province to utilize trails in both Provinces. Increasing the distribution of vendors would help to increase the compliance by non-club members.

Other jurisdictions have indicated that another significant factor in compliance and permit sales, is visible enforcement. Currently, many clubs have developed positive relationships with local RCMP detachments (ie. Nipawin) and have coordinated one or two days of trail permit enforcement. This activity must continue and be encouraged by all clubs. While enforcement of the trail permits

may be a low priority for most enforcement officials and subject to funding constraints, encouragement and cooperation from local club members is critical.

Clearly, increasing compliance must continue to be a priority for individual clubs and the SSA. Experience in other jurisdictions would indicate that it may take 5-6 years to reach a satisfactory level of compliance. In the meantime, the SSA must encourage increased compliance of the permit program through:

- Cooperation and coordination with enforcement officials;
- Increasing the distribution of permit vendors.
- Increased public education and awareness.

The recommendation section deals with suggestions addressing these issues.

Exhibit 2: Excess Permits Sold

Club Name	# of Club Members	# of Annual Permits	Excess Permits Sold
Yorkton Sno-Riders	107	373	266
Last Mountain Lake Drifters	56	315	259
Lakeland Snowmobile Club	41	221	180
Kelvington Trail Blazers	10	181	171
Candle Lake Sno Drifters	23	185	162
Moose Mountain Snowmobile Club	25	182	157
Hudson Bay Trail Riders	99	245	146
Calling Lake Cruisers	110	237	127
Naicam Snowblasters	26	128	102
Tisdale Snowmobile Club	21	112	91
Porcupine Trail Blasters	20	97	77
Kamsack Snow Drifters	45	120	75
Rough Rider Snowmobile Club	27	98	71
Melfort & District Trail Riders	56	124	68
Archerwill Drift Riders	17	82	65
Prairie & Pine Sno Riders	17	80	63
Battlefords Trail Breakers	81	144	63
Showstoppers Snowmobile Club	38	94	56
Prince Albert Snow Runners	16	60	44
Northern Lights Snowmobile Club	15	55	40
Fishing Lake Snowmobile Club	16	55	39
Lintlaw Bush Bandits	7	43	36
Esker Bear Inc	25	60	35
Springside Snowmobile Club	N/A	35	35
Weekes Bush Pushers Club	20	50	30
Pasquia Snow Goers Club	14	43	29
Whiteswan Snowhawks	6	32	26
Tri-Valley Trails	67	92	25
Twin Lakes Trail Blazers	155	180	25
Timber Trails Sno Riders	53	77	24
Rhein Sno Cruzers	28	50	22
Spiritwood Snowball Riders	8	28	20
Trakkers Snowmobile Club	18	30	12
Canwood Sno-Blazers	16	26	10
Parkland Snow Trackers	10	17	7
Blaine Lake Snowdrifterz Inc	11	18	7
Broadview Snow Busters	N/A	6	6
Bjorkdale Stubble Jumpers	9	11	2
Mistatim Snowpackers Club	10	12	2
Pelly Sno Prowlers	22	23	1
White Knucklers Snowmobile Club	38	38	0
Chitek Lake Bush Buddies	20	19	-1
Leoville Snow Drifters	19	17	-2
Elbow Lake Sno Drifters	21	17	-4
Crossroad Sno-Diggers	26	20	-6
Saskatoon Snowmobile Club	92	84	-8
Debden Sno-Travellers	45	34	-11
Border Explorers Snowmobile Club	66	22	-44
Totals	**1,672**	**4,272**	**2,600**

Source: SSA (1999/00 season)

The Trail System

The current Trail System, as seen in Appendix 1, spans the province from East to West as well as the Southeast corner to East central Saskatchewan. The system covers approximately 9,600 kms, including SSA and SERM maintained trails, mostly through the Parkland and Central regions of the province within the forests. Some notable exceptions to this are the trails in the Qu'Appelle Valley and the loop running North and South between Kindersley and Kerrobert. The Provincial Government, through SERM, currently provides trails within the following Provincial Parks: Duck Mountain, Greenwater Lake, Moose Mountain, Cypress Hills, Narrow Hills, Meadow Lake, Emma Lake.

Local snowmobile clubs maintain the SSA trails. Of the 86 clubs reporting to the SSA, 45 maintained groomed trail in the 1999/00 season. These 45 clubs maintain approximately 8,600 kms of SSA trails in Saskatchewan. In 2000/01 48 clubs maintained approximately 9000 km of trail.

In 1999/00, the Trail System maintenance costs amounted to $562,735 with an additional $41,000 in administration costs for the Trail Fund, which was operational for eight months of the 1999/00 year. In 2000/01, the maintenance costs increased to $888,435 with an additional $55,000 in administration costs. These costs exclude trail maintained by SERM. The increase in costs from 2000 to 2001 are due largely to a longer season, with greater snowfall, and the significant increase in fuel costs as well as a 4.5% increase in the total kilometres of trail to 9,000 kms maintained. On average in 1999, the trails cost approximately $66 per km to maintain. Compared to a total permit funding of just over $16 per km (24%) from the trail permit program. In 2000, the trails cost approximately $98 per km to maintain compared to trail funding of just under $24 per km (24%) from the trail permit program.

The percentage of costs covered by the trail permit revenues has remained constant at 24% despite the increase in the number of permits sold in 2000/01. Clearly, in order for the trail system to become self-sustaining this problem must be resolved. Either permit revenues need to increase substantially (increase number permits sold and increase in price) or the number of kilometres of fully funded trail needs to be reduced, or both.

For complete per km analysis of the 1999/00 season see Appendix 2.

Exhibit 3: Trail funding per km

Year	# of kms	Payout	Club Retained	Total Trail Funding * per km
2000/01	9,040	$142,519	$73,906	$23.93
1999/00	8,577	$ 89,966	$48,906	$16.19
1998/99	8,369	$143,500	-	$17.15
1997/98	8,688	$ 72,610	-	$8.36

Source: SSA
*includes the club retained commission

In order for the SSA trail system to be completely self-funded, at the current cost and permit price level, 18,579 permits would need to be sold (see Exhibit 4). That would mean 100% compliance of registered snowmobilers would be necessary plus compliance of currently unregistered snowmobilers.

If permit prices were to be increased, the number of permits needed to sustain operations would be reduced significantly. An increase to $65 would reduce the break-even point to 12,792 permits (using an average of 1999/00 and 2000/01 maintenance costs), which would be near full compliance of all registered snowmobiles. A further increase in permit price to $75 would reduce the break-even point to 11,147 permits.

Exhibit 4: Break Even Analysis

Permit Cost	@ $45	@ $55	@ $65	@ $75
Average Total Maintenance Costs:	725,585	725,585	725,585	725,585
Total Administration Costs:	54,727	54,727	54,727	54,727
Total Costs:	780,312	780,312	780,312	780,312
Revenue per permit (net GST)	42	51	61	70
Number of Permit Sales to Break Even:	18,579	15,300	12,792	11,147

Comparatively, as seen in Exhibit 5, Saskatchewan's permit price is currently lower than most other jurisdictions. Quebec's permit price includes a $40 charge for $500,000 of liability coverage that is mandatory in the province.

Exhibit 5: Comparative Costs

Province	Cost to Register	Cost of Trail Permit		
		Before December	After December	On the Trail
Manitoba	94.00	50.00	75.00	75.00
Ontario	30.00	100.00	120.00	160.00
Quebec	*	120.00	170.00	160.00
Saskatchewan	95.00	45.00	45.00	45.00

* not available at time of report

Given the reciprocal arrangement with SnoMan in Manitoba, Saskatchewan's permit pricing should at least be similar to that Province.

If operating costs continue to rise, because of increased fuel costs, increased kilometres, and equipment replacement, the strain on the self-sustainability of the current systems will continue to increase. Revenue streams from permit sales will have to increase in order to maintain even the current system.

The overall trail system itself presents additional challenges. The total number of kilometres of trail groomed by snowmobile clubs and received funding from the trail fund in 2000/01 was just over 9,000 kms. As indicated earlier, permit revenues amounted to only 24% of the total cost of maintaining the system.

At present, the overall trail system includes some 3,000 kms of trail on Crown land which is maintained by the snowmobile clubs and some 690 kms of trail in the Provincial Parks which is maintained by SERM. The portion of the trail through Crown lands (primarily in the North central and East central regions) represents approximately one third of the total trail system groomed by the clubs and funded by the Trail Fund. However, under section 20.1(1) of *The Snowmobile Act*, trail permits are currently not required on Crown lands nor in Provincial Parks and therefore, this one third of the trail system generates no revenue toward the Trail Fund.

This situation also contributes to confusion on the part of the recreational snowmobiler. At present, it is very difficult for the snowmobiler to identify where the Crown boundaries are and therefore where a permit is required and where it is not.

Concentrating the recreational snowmobilers on designated groomed trails within the Crown lands may reduce the environmental impact and increase the safety of the riders as the designated trails include appropriate signage of potential hazards.

When the mandatory permit system was introduced there was some sentiment that residents should have free access to Crown land and that private clubs or special interest groups should not profit from the use of Crown land. However,

the permit fee is only designed to recover the cost of grooming the trail. Precedent has also been set by other stakeholders (such as outfitters) for charging a fee for services provided on Crown lands. Perhaps, like other current users of crown lands, some form of leasing or licensing of the trails by the clubs or the snowmobile association could be explored. The trail permit fees should continue to only apply to recreational users of the trail. Users such as trappers and hunters should continue to be exempt.

We understand that SERM is currently reviewing the overall administration and maintenance of the Trail System, which it presently manages within the parks. While the results of this review are not yet known, we believe that a single permit system applicable to all groomed trails in the Province would be preferable.

If the present regulations were to be amended to require a trail permit for Provincial Parks, permit revenues generated from sales within the Parks should be included in the Trail Fund. If SERM continued to bare the cost of grooming and maintaining the Trail System within the Parks, clearly, SERM should then also participate in the Trail Fund payout. Their participation should be on the same basis and under the same criteria as the local clubs.

The designated trail system should also be reviewed with a view to overall rationalization.

When the groomed trails were first developed, most of it was done at the local club level in the East Central and North East regions of the Province. Before the Trail Fund was established, clubs bore the full cost of development and maintenance and paid for the costs directly through their own fundraising efforts. The Trail Systems in these areas developed on a somewhat ad hoc basis, as local clubs saw fit at the time. Some of these trails see little traffic other than local residents. Some trails in these areas appear to be redundant, as they may begin and end at the same points as other trails, or form short loops with other trail segments only a few kilometres away.

Solely for the sake of examples and without drawing any conclusions without appropriate input, but within the areas, East of Aborfield and North and East of Kelvington and Nut Mountain there appears to be a number of trails that form loops or that begin and end at the same points as other trails. There appears to be a number of similar examples throughout the present Trail System. In an effort to maximize the benefit of the Trail Fund to the system overall, it is important that there are no redundancies within the funded Trail System.

Further, it is generally recognized that some regions lend themselves to greater usage not only by Saskatchewan residents but also by non-resident tourists. These areas are typically characterized by longer seasons, greater snowfall, a scenic environment and supported by an infrastructure of services and accommodations and are also characterized by a higher volume of traffic.

Generally these areas include (but are not limited to) the North East and East Central regions including Moose Mountain and Duck Mountain, Green Water Lake and the Hudson Bay corridor. Also included would be the Trans Canada Trail System throughout the Province and other key or strategic sections of the overall Trail System. We would suggest that key components of the trails within these regions be given greater priority. These primary trails should be given greater weight in the fund allocation process.

Ontario for example has developed a system of "trunk trails", "connector trails" and "feeder trails". Where trunk trails are major trails linked throughout the Province, connector trails provide connections between trunk trails and feeder trails provide links to connector or trunk trails.

"Primary" trails should be groomed and signed to a standard, which ensures not only an enjoyable, but also memorable snowmobiling experience for all riders, every time. By definition, these primary trails see higher traffic and therefore likely require a higher level of maintenance then the secondary trails. Therefore these "primary" trails should be allocated an increased level of funding within the Trail Fund formula.

We would suggest that a set of criteria be developed to evaluate existing trails for merit within the overall funded Trail System. We believe that the criteria should include such considerations as:

- Providing a link to other trails
- interest to riders other than strictly local residents or local club members
- enhancing the overall efficiency of the Trail System

Applying such criteria, the trail system could then be designated into "primary" and "secondary" trails.

In summary the most significant issues involving the overall trail system include the following:

- Permit pricing structure which currently could not achieve a fully break even position on a completely user-pay basis even with full compliance

- Present regulations which include a permit requirement only for designated trails situated on private land or on a highway right of way. Therefore, approximately one third of the present trail system generates no revenue.

- The overall trail system appears to include a number of redundancies and localized trails which have the effect of diluting the overall Trail Fund payout per kilometre.

Potential solutions to address these issues are more fully described in the recommendation section of this report, but generally include increasing the price of trail permits, consideration of seeking amendments to the regulations to include Provincial Parks and Crown lands within the permit requirements and the designation of primary and secondary trails within the overall system.

Strategic Planning

Administration of the overall Trail System is achieved through many different bodies: SERM manages the trails within the Provincial Park areas; the individual clubs manage the trails through Crown and private land; the SSA organizes the training needed for groomers and safety; the Trail Fund Committee manages and allocates the permit revenue. With all of these parties involved in the administration of the Trail System, leadership and strategic planning becomes a critical issue.

At present, each group works independently on its own strategic plans. The SSA provides some guidance to local clubs and plays an oversight role where practical. The Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association (SSA) also develops a strategic plan for the Association but deals more with the goals and objectives of the Association (as it should) rather than with planning and setting out specific priorities for the Trail System as a whole. SERM manages and plans the Trail System within the parks. However, at present SERM does not participate in the funding from the Trail Fund.

In the 2000/01 season, trails were added to the system linking Saskatoon to the trails at Shellbrook. Also, proposals exist for the development of trails between Hudson Bay and Flin Flon and from LaRonge to Il-a-la-Crosse. In the SSA's Strategic Plan of September 16, 2000, one of the goals for the next 3 to 5 years is to expand the Trail System to 12,000 kms. As indicated earlier, the Trail Fund revenues presently only cover approximately 24% of the cost of maintaining the existing trail system. These additions would add several hundred more kms to the Trail System and further dilute the pool of funds available to the current trail providers. Such expansions and development of new trail create increasing problems and strain on already scarce resources.

There does not appear to be any coordinated strategic plan for the maintenance and long-term development of the Trail System. There are no areas of focused priority and little coordination with SERM. Consequently, the Trail Fund payout per km continues to be diluted.

A coordinated overall plan for the entire trail system is required in order to ensure the integrity of the System, and to avoid dilution of the Trail Fund revenues (on a per km basis) through the addition of non-strategic trails at the club level or the funding of non-strategic maintenance or projects. The overall Trail System plan should be long term, should prioritize proposed developments based on consistent criteria and should be communicated to all significant stakeholders.

Furthermore, that as part of the overall strategic planning process, existing trails should be subjected to the same criteria as new trail and that some sections may be designated as non-funded.

The most significant issue with respect to strategic planning appears to be this lack of an overall plan addressing the entire system and coordinated with all primary stakeholders. Such an overall plan should also consider the objectives of the Trail System and the availability and allocation of resources to fund new and existing trails.

A solution designed to address this issue includes the establishment of an "umbrella" body to develop and administer such an overall system strategic plan. This solution is included in the recommendations section of this report.

Grooming Equipment

Over half of the grooming equipment currently being used in the Trail System is over 20 years old (see Exhibit 6) and each groomer is responsible for grooming approximately 214 kms of trail (Appendix 3). These groomers range in condition from the inoperable Track Truck in Weekes to the almost new 1997 John Deere in Hudson Bay.

Exhibit 6: Snowmobile Club Groomer Age Analysis

Groomer Age	Number	Percentage
Under 10 years	9	22%
15 to 10 years old	8	19%
20 to 15 years old	3	7%
20+ years old	22	52%
Totals	**42**	**100%**

Source: SSA

As seen in Appendix 3, usage differs among clubs and condition of machine. Hudson Bay supports the most kilometres of trail (811 kms) while Debden and Blaine Lake support the least (75 kms and 74 kms respectively). It should be noted that although Yorkton supports 561.5 kms of trail that they do so with two groomers. The top five clubs, in terms of kms, all contract out grooming services to smaller clubs.

As a comparison, in Manitoba, SnoMan reports that they maintain approximately, 10,000 kms of trail with 62 groomers for an average of 161 kms per groomer.

Newer groomers have greater capacity, less downtime and can support more kms of trail than the older units. With re-investment into newer machines, the opportunity for rationalization of groomer machines exists. This would reduce the amount of capital funds that are invested overall. However, new grooming machines are expensive. A new Bombardier BR180 for example, would cost approximately $135,000. Most clubs would be unable to finance this cost at this time.

Adding the cost of replacing the groomer to Exhibit 4, assuming that two new groomers need to be purchased every five years and that the cost for a new groomer is approximately $135,000 the break-even analysis is outlined in Exhibit 7 below. These calculations have used the average actual maintenance costs of 1999/00 and 2000/01.

Exhibit 7: Break Even Analysis with Groomer Replacement

Permit Cost	@ $45	@ $55	@ $65	@ $75
Average Total Grooming Costs:	725,585	725,585	725,585	725,585
Total Administration Costs:	54,727	54,727	54,727	54,727
Total Groomer Replacement Costs:	54,000	54,000	54,000	54,000
Total Costs:	834,312	834,312	834,312	834,312
Revenue per permit (net GST)	42	51	61	70
Number of Permit Sales to Break Even:	19,865	16,359	13,677	11,919

Taking the capital reinvestment necessary for continued operation of the Trail System into account the break-even point jumps from 18,579 permits sold to 19,865 permits sold. That is more permits than snowmobiles currently registered with SGI – total registration with SGI over the 2000/01 season was 17,730 snowmobiles.

Further opportunity for rationalization may exist within the Province in certain areas due to the close proximity of groomers. This is especially true in areas where a Provincially owned groomer is located in a provincial park in close proximity to a local club owned groomer. For instance, Duck Mountain Provincial Park operates a 1977 Tucker Snow Cat, which is in very poor condition. 12 kms away, the Duck Mountain Grooming and Snowmobile club in Kamsack owns a 1997 Bombardier BR160 in Kamsack. Another opportunity for cooperation in grooming trails exists in areas like Chitek Lake. Within 24 kms of each other, Chitek and Leoville operate groomers from the 1970's that will both soon be in need of replacement. Instead of both clubs fundraising and purchasing new or newer groomers, there may be an opportunity for the two clubs to work together and get one new machine. These are only a few examples of areas of opportunities for cooperation. Several other similar situations exist in the Province.

SERM is in the process of reviewing the maintenance of the Trail System within the Provincial Parks and the results of the review are not yet finalized. However, in reviewing the overall cost of maintaining and grooming the entire Trail System,

there is opportunity for greater coordination between SERM and the connecting clubs. Given the average number of kms of snowmobile trail within the major parks compared to the average number of kms maintained by local clubs with groomers, it would appear that there may be significant opportunity for sharing of equipment on a contracted basis or sub-contracting grooming services to the benefit of all. In this context, the relative age of the groomers involved should also be taken into account in developing any plan for contracting sharing of equipment.

Full contracting out may raise some issues with labour and unions. However, the opportunities should be investigated. Perhaps SERM could provide grooming services to local clubs. Thereby saving the club the capital cost and the maintenance of the groomer, making better utilization of the SERM equipment and generating some revenue to help offset some of SERM's costs. Naturally any such arrangements would have to be of benefit to both parties, the local club and SERM. However, that opportunity should be investigated with a view to reducing the cost of maintaining the overall Trail System.

For a complete list of the groomers in the Province see Appendix 4.

Consideration of the grooming equipment deployed within the overall system presents a couple of issues. There may be an opportunity to help control some of the maintenance costs through to rationalization of equipment use, both between individual clubs and with SERM. Additionally, the capital cost of the equipment should be included in the overall costs of maintaining the trail system to provide a true reflection of the total costs.

Solutions to address these issues may simply include continued and increased coordination between the clubs and with SERM. Additionally consideration should be given to reflecting a depreciation charge within the club maintenance costs.

Administration and Allocation of Current Funding

The current Trail Fund allocations are determined by the Trail Fund Committee based on a thirteen point system. The intent of the system is to allocate funds where they are needed most. Appendix 5 contains an overview of the elements of the point system. Using the point system, the amount each club would be paid out at the end of the season is based on the funds available and the points each club has earned throughout the season. For example, if a club earned 9.5 points and had 100 km of groomed trail in a year when there was $117,000 available for distribution, as in the calculation in Exhibit 8, they would receive $950 in funding from the Trail Fund ($1 per point x 9.5 points earned x 100 km groomed). The payout will not exceed the amount of grooming expenses in the year.

Exhibit 8: Payout Calculation

Example of Trail Fund Payout Calculation:

Total Funds Available for Distribution	$117,000
Divided by Total kms Established	9,000
	13
Divided by Total Club Points Available	13
Payout per Point Earned	$1

The Trail Fund Committee, which oversees the allocation system, consists of six volunteer members:

1. SSA Chairperson
2. SSA Treasurer
3. North West Zone Rep
4. North East Zone Rep
5. South West Zone Rep
6. South East Zone Rep

Each zone rep is elected by delegates from each club in their zone. The zone rep then becomes responsible to act as a liaison between the Trail Fund and the

individual clubs. In addition they must review each club's point assessment for accuracy.

The point assessments are done by each club and then submitted to the Trail Fund. Since it is a self-assessment process the zone rep review is critical. The points are then reviewed and approved by the Committee.

Permits are sold by each club with the proceeds of each $45 permit split as follows: $10 retained by the club, $2.94 remitted as GST and $32.06 to the Trail Fund. At the end of each season, around July or August, the payout to the club occurs.

The physical custody and administration of the Trail Fund resides with the SSA. clubs remit their net permit sales to the SSA who invests and manages the fund. The SSA administration of the fund appears very efficient. The fund is well managed and expenses are minimized wherever possible and practical to do so. The Trail Fund is subject to an annual audit and all administrative costs are critically reviewed on a regular basis. A review of the Trail Fund Financial Statements indicates that the largest individual cost that the fund bears is that of printing the trail permits and maps. These printing costs are offset by revenue from advertising on the maps. The SSA staff calculates the payouts and write the cheques, which are then approved by the Trail Fund Committee. However, the databases that log the permits and membership are maintained by the SSA on behalf of the Trail Fund. As well, the day-to-day administrative tasks and enquiries are handled by the SSA. This study examined only the administration of the trail fund itself, and not the overall administration of the SSA.

The present system appears to be functioning well with no significant issues. The only considerations regarding the allocation of funds are as discussed under the Trail System section of this report where the allocation formulas may be adjusted to include weightings for "primary" and "secondary" trails.

Tourism

The Trail System was also developed to improve winter tourism within the Province and increase safety to riders. Many studies have been done to assess the impact of snowmobiling on various jurisdictions in Canada including Saskatchewan. The 1990 Deloitte & Touche study *Saskatchewan Snowmobiling Impact Study* concluded that the annual expenditures in the Province amounted to between $64.5 million and $99.1 million of which between $4 million and $6.3 million was contributed to Provincial tax revenues. Eleven years later the Trail System has grown to approximately 9,000 kms and the potential to attract riders from out of Province has grown with it.

During the 2000/01 season there were a total of 1,487 seven day permits sold, up from 608 in 1999/00. There were also 1,565 one-day permits sold compared to 779 in the previous year (per SSA records). In addition there were numerous visits along the Eastern border from Manitoba residents who currently have reciprocity with Saskatchewan as long as they have a valid SnoMan permit. These increases of over 100% are significant in light of the 50% increase in annual permit sales over the same period. While there is no specific information available, the recreational snowmobiling tourist is more likely to purchase a one-day or seven day permit.

Currently, there is a national study underway of the impact of snowmobiling on the economy. The study is being conducted out of Toronto by the firm of Pernnell Kerr Forster. Unfortunately, Saskatchewan is not directly involved in this study as both the SSA and Tourism Saskatchewan declined to participate directly in the study.

Although no specific current data has been compiled on the impact of snowmobiling in Saskatchewan, the numbers represented in 1990 by Deloitte & Touche would still seem to be valid, as snowmobiling has increased in popularity since then.

Anecdotally, it seems that there is a positive effect on the Provincial economy through snowmobile tourism. Several "summer" resorts throughout the Province,

but in particular in the East Central regions have managed to build business in the winter season by servicing the recreational snowmobiling community. Businesses are open over the winter in large part due to snowmobiling.

In the northern part of the Province there are now outfitters that specialize in snowmobile tours and expeditions. This has enabled them to bridge the seasonal gap in their businesses that were traditionally limited to the hunting and fishing seasons.

Indeed, within the context of this study, a number of accommodation, restaurant and bar facilities and operations were contacted in these regions. All indicated that snowmobilers are an increasing part of their business and in some cases make the difference in the survival of the business during the "off season". While there is no formal data, out of province snowmobilers appear to be an increasing component of the winter tourism.

A detailed review of the tourism impact from snowmobiling is outside the scope of this report. However, it seems that there is enough circumstantial evidence to suggest that there is an economic impact from snowmobiling. At this point there is little hard evidence available to support a strong conclusion. However, if nothing else, there is potential within the Province to develop a strong tourism trade built on the trail system. By developing the tourism aspect of the trail system, the SSA would also be developing a new revenue source for the Trail Fund.

As such, the SSA and local snowmobile clubs should work on a regional and provincial basis with Tourism Saskatchewan to develop the Snowmobile Tourism potential in the Province. This would include the development of strong statistical evidence to track and measure the growth of tourism along the trail system.

Recommendations

As indicated by the preceding situational analysis, there are a number of issues facing the Provincial snowmobile Trail System and the Trail Fund. However, all stakeholders are committed to the original objectives of the Trail Fund and ensuring that the system can be maintained as a viable, self sustaining, user pay system. It is also generally recognized that the Trail Fund is yet in its infancy and requires more time to continue to grow and mature. Saskatchewan has only just completed the second season of the mandatory permit program. Experience in other jurisdictions would indicate that a time frame of an additional 3 to 5 years is required to reach the full potential of the program.

In order for the system to continue to be viable, consideration must be given to both controlling and managing costs and increasing revenues. During the situational analysis a number of issues were identified that need to be addressed and that provide opportunities for improvement in the overall system.

The recommendations which follow are designed to address these issues and to help position the Trail System and the Trail Fund for long term self sustainability.

Recommendation 1 Enforcement

It is recommended that local clubs and the SSA continue to work closely with local enforcement officials to promote public awareness and increase the visibility of enforcement for the purpose of compliance.

Many clubs have developed a positive relationship with local enforcement officials that have allowed them to increase the visibility of the trail permit program. In order to increase compliance it is the role of the local clubs and SSA to work with local enforcement officials to create an environment of acceptance and compliance.

Recommendation 2 Permit Distribution

The number of permit vendors should be increased.

The local clubs and the SSA must focus on increasing the number of permit vendors. Other jurisdictions have indicated that access to permits is one of the greatest contributors to increased sales and compliance. By focusing on increasing distribution of permit vendors, the trail system could increase revenue streams from non-snowmobile club riders. This increased compliance would enable the system to support itself as a true user-pay system.

Recommendation 3 Trail Permit Pricing

It is recommended that the price of the trail permit be increased for the 2002/03 season and that the SSA consider a two-tiered pricing model to promote purchase of the permits early in the season.

The permit system is intended and designed to be a self sustaining, user pay system. As indicated in the situational analysis, the present Trail System of some 9,000 kms costs approximately $98 per km to maintain. With estimated seasonal permit sales of nearly 12,000 permits by the seventh year of the program (based on the SnoMan experience in Manitoba), within 5 years the permit would have to be priced at about $75 to be fully self sustainable (assuming no further increases in costs or kms).

Consideration should be given to a fee of at least $60 for the 2002/03 season. A larger increase may be appropriate if Manitoba also increases their permit fees.

Consideration should also be given to implementing an "early bird" price for season passes purchased before sometime in mid December. Most other jurisdictions in Canada utilize such a two-tiered pricing system. With the price after December being significantly higher so as to promote early purchase of the trail permits.

It is understood that at its 2000 annual meeting, the SSA did ratify such a two-tiered permit pricing system but should consider establishing a more significant post-December price.

At its recent 2000 annual meeting, the SSA approved a two-tiered pricing system with a permit cost of $45.00 purchased before December 1, and $55.00 if purchased on or after December 1.

Recommendation 4 Crown Lands and Parks

Consideration should be given to making accommodations to have designated trails within Provincial Parks and on Crown lands included in the *Snowmobile Act* and requiring a valid Trail Permit for use.

Implementation of this recommendation would remove much of the confusion in the Trail System in that under the current regulations a significant portion of the Trail System does not require a permit for use and therefore generates no revenue. It also simplifies the system in that all designated groomed trail would require a permit for use.

If this recommendation were to be considered, Trail Permit revenues generated from sales within the Parks should be included in the Trail Fund and further, Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management (SERM), should then participate in the Trail Fund revenue.

Recommendation 5 Development of a Priority Trail System

The existing Trail System should be stratified into primary and secondary trails within the system.

To some degree, the current point system within the funding application system already rewards clubs with longer seasons, higher traffic volumes and greater permit sales. However, the current point system and funding allocation is only done at the club level, not for specific trails or areas within a region. Prioritization of the Trail System would allow a higher level of funding for strategic areas or sections of trail and those specific sections of trail which may require a higher level of maintenance due to traffic volumes on them. It would also enable targeting funding for strategic development or trail enhancements.

Recommendation 6 Overall System Strategic Plan

It is recommended that an overall strategic plan be developed for the Trail System and that an "umbrella" body be designed to have responsibility for this strategic plan. A mechanism should be established to ensure "buy-in" to the plan by all clubs and other significant stakeholders.

The Trail Fund Committee may be a good starting point for such a planning body. The Committee already includes zone reps, which represent the clubs from each of the four zones as well as the SSA treasurer and president or president's appointee. The "Trail Planning Committee" should also consider the inclusion of representatives from other stakeholders.

The Committee's mandate should be to develop a coordinated strategic plan for maintenance and the future development of the entire Provincial Trail System. Such a coordinated overall plan is required in order to ensure the integrity of the entire Trail System, and to avoid dilution of the Trail Fund revenues (on a per km basis) through the addition of non-strategic trails at the club level or the funding of non-strategic maintenance or projects. The overall Trail System plan should be long term, should prioritize proposed developments based on consistent criteria and should be communicated to all significant stakeholders.

Further, as part of the overall strategic planning process, existing trails should be subjected to the same criteria as new trail and that some sections may be designated as non-funded.

Recommendation 7 Equipment Rationalization

It is recommended that there be increased coordination between clubs and with SERM to ensure maximum utilization of the grooming equipment within the entire Trail System.

As indicated in the situational analysis, there are currently 42 groomers in use in the Province, grooming some 9,000 kms of trail excluding equipment and kms for trail within the Provincial Parks maintained by SERM. Various clubs groom anywhere from 70 kms to over 400 kms with their grooming equipment. The major Provincial Parks average approximately 115 kms of trail per park. Consideration should be given to the opportunity for the sharing or contracting of equipment and services between SERM and the clubs operating within the proximity of the Parks.

Similarly, local clubs should also continue to investigate opportunities with each other. A number of clubs currently have such arrangements. As equipment ages and requires replacement further opportunities for rationalization should be explored.

Conclusions

In conducting this study of snowmobiling in Saskatchewan, and in particular, the groomed Trail System and the Trail Permit Program, all stakeholders were very cooperative. Also encouraging, was the continued commitment of all stakeholders to the original objectives of the program, that being that the system became a self-sustaining, user-pay system.

In conducting the study analysis a number of issues were identified that present impediments to the self-sustaining objective both in terms of and permit revenues and in terms of cost containment. Within the general formula of self-sustainability, where revenues must cover the costs of maintenance and development, the system faces a number of challenges. However, these challenges may be summarized into a few basic categories.

Revenues could be enhanced through increased compliance and increased pricing. Compliance is still well short of the level required for self-sustainability. While the program is only in its second year of mandatory permits, there may be a number of steps which could be taken to help improve overall compliance. Such steps include measures such as improving the availability of permits through increased number of vendors, increased coordination with local enforcement officials, including the entire designated trail system within the permit requirement and the promotion of public awareness of the benefits of the Trail System and the permit requirements. Revenue could also be increased through price increases in the cost of permits and implementing a two-tiered pricing model.

On the other side of the equation, there may be a number of opportunities to manage and control the overall development and maintenance costs of the Trail System. These opportunities include such measures as the development of a fully coordinated strategic plan to guide the development and maintenance at the overall system level, the stratification of the trail system into primary and secondary trails to enable the targeting of funding to specific trails of strategic importance to the overall system, and the continued coordination and rationalization of grooming equipment.

While the challenges may be many, there is a resolve among significant stakeholders to deal with these challenges for the benefit of all stakeholders and the recreational snowmobiling public. If all stakeholders remain steadfast in this resolve and remain focused on addressing the issues identified above, the Snowmobile Trail System and Permit Program in Saskatchewan can achieve their objective of being a long-term, self-sustaining, user-pay system.

Appendix 1: Map of Saskatchewan Trail System

Trail Types Trans-Canada-Snowmobile Ungroomed
Primary Groomed

Appendix 2: Per kilometre Statistics

Club Name	Km's	Grooming Costs	Payout Received	Fundraising Required	Cost per Km	Payout per Km	% of Costs Covered
Hudson Bay Trail Riders	610.0	66,286.38	7,975.14	58,311.24	108.67	13.07	12.03%
Moose Mountain Snowmobile Club	403.0	16,738.96	3,951.62	12,787.34	41.54	9.81	23.61%
Lakeland Snowmobile Club	361.0	7,970.00	3,933.10	4,036.90	22.08	10.90	49.35%
Esker Bear Inc	350.0	9,385.09	4,385.24	4,999.85	26.81	12.53	46.73%
Twin Lakes Trail Blazers	334.0	40,450.78	4,002.82	36,447.96	121.11	11.98	9.90%
Rough Rider Snowmobile Club	327.0	22,493.92	3,384.53	19,109.39	68.79	10.35	15.05%
Candle Lake Sno Drifters	312.0	19,741.26	4,079.09	15,662.17	63.27	13.07	20.66%
Calling Lake Cruisers	300.0	19,037.00	2,778.23	16,258.77	63.46	9.26	14.59%
Battlefords Trail Breakers	295.0	17,768.00	2,892.62	14,875.38	60.23	9.81	16.28%
Last Mountain Lake Drifters	282.0	33,365.86	2,611.53	30,754.33	118.32	9.26	7.83%
Tri-Valley Trails	255.0	28,110.85	2,500.40	25,610.45	110.24	9.81	8.89%
Northern Lights Snowmobile Club	254.0	28,533.21	2,767.33	25,765.88	112.34	10.90	9.70%
Lintlaw Bush Bandits	250.0	11,219.01	2,996.13	8,222.88	44.88	11.98	26.71%
Yorkton Sno-Riders	247.0	16,636.68	2,556.51	14,080.17	67.35	10.35	15.37%
Melfort & District Trail Riders	230.0	7,151.59	2,756.44	4,395.15	31.09	11.98	38.54%
Fishing Lake Snowmobile Club	227.0	5,229.31	1,607.56	3,621.75	23.04	7.08	30.74%
Kelvington Trail Blazers	205.0	10,518.14	2,233.48	8,284.66	51.31	10.90	21.23%
Prairie & Pine Sno Riders	202.0	18,855.92	2,420.37	16,435.05	93.35	11.98	12.84%
Mistatim Snowpackers Club	189.0	2,189.59	1,441.41	748.18	11.59	7.63	65.83%
Leoville Snow Drifters	180.0	9,971.36	1,961.10	8,010.26	55.40	10.90	19.67%
Weekes Bush Pushers Club	180.0	5,437.63	1,764.99	3,672.64	30.21	9.81	32.46%
Naicam Snowblasters	177.0	11,850.06	2,024.84	9,825.22	66.95	11.44	17.09%
Chitek Lake Bush Buddies	176.0	4,167.96	1,534.02	2,633.94	23.68	8.72	36.81%
Timber Trails Sno Riders	164.0	12,153.15	1,876.12	10,277.03	74.10	11.44	15.44%
Archerwill Drift Riders	161.0	3,561.51	1,578.69	1,982.82	22.12	9.81	44.33%
Pasqua Snow Goers Club	158.0	9,060.43	1,549.27	7,511.16	57.34	9.81	17.10%
Crossroad Sno-Diggers	129.0	6,571.60	1,194.64	5,376.96	50.94	9.26	18.18%
Spiritwood Snowball Riders	127.0	7,677.77	1,176.12	6,501.65	60.45	9.26	15.32%

Club Name	Km's	Grooming Costs	Payout Received	Fundraising Required	Cost per Km	Payout per Km	% of Costs Covered
Showstoppers Snowmobile Club	119.0	11,253.00	777.90	10,475.10	94.56	6.54	6.91%
Whiteswan Snowhawks	114.0	10,882.03	1,428.33	9,453.70	95.46	12.53	13.13%
Bjorkdale Stubble Jumpers	110.0	4,124.50	958.76	3,165.74	37.50	8.72	23.25%
Porcupine Trail Blasters	109.0	8,546.00	1,128.18	7,417.82	78.40	10.35	13.20%
White Knucklers Snowmobile Club	105.0	8,805.30	743.58	8,061.72	83.86	7.08	8.44%
Kamsack Snow Drifters	100.0	4,509.91	1,035.03	3,474.88	45.10	10.35	22.95%
Parkland Snow Trackers	98.0	5,789.53	907.55	4,881.98	59.08	9.26	15.68%
Border Explorers Snowmobile Club	93.0	21,358.00	861.25	20,496.75	229.66	9.26	4.03%
Tisdale Snowmobile Club	90.0	10,044.00	833.47	9,210.53	111.60	9.26	8.30%
Pelly Sno Prowlers	88.0	3,434.59	910.82	2,523.77	39.03	10.35	26.52%
Trakkers Snowmobile Club	80.0	4,939.34	828.02	4,111.32	61.74	10.35	16.76%
Canwood Sno-Blazers	77.0	2,328.47	713.08	1,615.39	30.24	9.26	30.62%
Debden Sno-Travellers	75.0	2,207.42	776.27	1,431.15	29.43	10.35	35.17%
Blaine Lake Snowdrifterz Inc	74.0	2,170.00	564.36	1,605.64	29.32	7.63	26.01%
Prince Albert Snow Runners	70.0	2,070.38	762.65	1,307.73	29.58	10.90	36.84%
Rhein Sno Cruzers	47.5	2,176.86	414.01	1,762.85	45.83	8.72	19.02%
Elbow Lake Sno Drifters	42.0	2,578.04	388.95	2,189.09	61.38	9.26	15.09%
Saskatoon Snowmobile Club	0.0	3,384.85	-	3,384.85	N/A	N/A	N/A
Snowmobile Club Sub-Total	8576.5	562,735.24	89,966.05	472,769.19	65.61	10.49	15.99%
Emma Lake Provincial Park (SERM)*	53.0	1,532.00	-	-	28.91	-	0.00%
Narrow Hills Provincial Park (SERM)*	95.0	12,000.00	-	-	126.32	-	0.00%
Greenwater Lake Provincial Park (SERM)*	103.0	34,183.00	-	-	331.87	-	0.00%
Duck Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)*	110.0	33,042.00	-	-	300.38	-	0.00%
Meadow Lake Provincial Park (SERM)*	115.0	7,770.00	-	-	67.57	-	0.00%
Moose Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)*	123.0	23,305.00	-	-	189.47	-	0.00%
Totals	9,175.50	674,567.24	89,966.05	472,769.19	73.52	9.81	13.34%

Source: SSA (1999/2000 Season)

* Costs paid by the Provincial Government through SERM

Appendix 3: Groomer Utilization

Club Name	Location	Year	Km's	Notes
Hudson Bay Trail Riders	Hudson Bay	1997	811.0	1
Yorkton Sno-Riders	Yorkton	1996 & 1994	561.5	2
Twin Lakes Trail Blazers	Nipawin	1985	538.0	3
Lakeland Snowmobile Club	Christopher Lake	1989	431.0	4
Duck Mountain Grooming & Snowmobile Club	Kamsack	1997	418.0	5
Moose Mountain Snowmobile Club	Windthorst	1989	403.0	
Esker Bear Inc	Choiceland	1977	350.0	
Rough Rider Snowmobile Club	Preeceville	1985	327.0	
Candle Lake Sno Drifters	Saskatoon	1994	312.0	
Calling Lake Cruisers	Fort Qu'Appelle	1987	300.0	
Battlefords Trail Breakers	Battlefords	1993	295.0	
Last Mountain Lake Drifters	Regina Beach	1992	282.0	
Tri-Valley Trails	Moosomin	1985	255.0	
Northern Lights Snowmobile Club	Meadow Lake	1986	254.0	
Lintlaw Bush Bandits	Lintlaw	1974	250.0	
Melfort & District Trail Riders	Melfort	1974	230.0	
Kelvington Trail Blazers	Kelvington	1981	205.0	
Weekes Bush Pushers Club	Weekes	1978	180.0	
Leoville Snow Drifters	Leoville	1974	180.0	
Naicam Snowblasters	Naicam	1980	177.0	
Chitek Lake Bush Buddies	Chitek	1977	176.0	
Timber Trails Sno Riders	Big River	1994	164.0	
Archerwill Drift Riders	Archerwill	1987	161.0	
Pasquia Snow Goers Club	Arborfield	1974	158.0	
Crossroad Sno-Diggers	Whitewood	1975	129.0	
Spiritwood Snowball Riders	Spiritwood	1973	127.0	
Moose Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)	Moose Mountain	1971	123.0	
Showstoppers Snowmobile Club	Melville	1991	119.0	
Duck Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)	Duck Mountain	1977	110.0	
Bjorkdale Stubble Jumpers	Bjorkdale	1980	110.0	
Porcupine Trail Blasters	Porcupine Plaine	1976	109.0	
White Knucklers Snowmobile Club	Kindersley	1994	105.0	
Greenwater Lake Provincial Park (SERM)	Greenwater	1981	103.0	
Parkland Snow Trackers	Shellbrook	1976	98.0	
Narrow Hills Provincial Park (SERM)	Narrow Hills	1980	95.0	
Border Explorers Snowmobile Club	FlinFlon		93.0	6
Canwood Sno-Blazers	Canwood	1978	77.0	
Debden Sno-Travellers	Debden	1974	75.0	
Blaine Lake Snowdrifterz Inc	Blaine Lake		74.0	7
Saskatoon Snowmobile Club	Saskatoon	1989	0.0	8
Lac La Ronge Provincial Park (SERM)	Lac La Ronge	1970	0.0	9
Estevan Snowmobile Club	Estevan	1990		8
SouthEast Sask Stubble Jumpers	Alida	1975		8
Trail Groomed by Snowmobiles pulling drags			237.0	
Totals			**9,202.5**	

Source: SSA (1999/00 Season)

Notes:

1 - kms include contracted grooming allocations from Mistatim, Prairie & Pine
2 - kms include contracted grooming allocations from Fishing Lake, Rhein, Trakkers
3 - kms include contracted grooming allocations from Tisdale, Whiteswan
4 - kms include contracted grooming allocations from the Prince Albert Snow Runners
5 - kms include contracted grooming allocations from Mistatim, Pelly, Praire & Pine, Trakkers
6 - Manitoba Groomer
7 - can no longer afford to groom
8 - began grooming after 1999/2000
9 - Lac La Ronge currently has 62kms of cross country ski trail but no groomed snowmobile trail.

Appendix 4: Groomer Inventory

Club Name	Location	Year Make & Model
Lac La Ronge Provincial Park (SERM)	Lac La Ronge	1970 Bombardier 250V Ski Dozer
Moose Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)	Moose Mountain	1971 Bombardier SV200 Ski Dozer
Timber Trails Sno Riders	Big River	1973 Bombardier SV250
Debden Sno-Travellers	Debden	1974 Bombardier Snow Cat SR74
Leoville Snow Drifters	Leoville	1974 Model 2100C Thiekal Groomer
Melfort & District Trail Riders	Melfort	1974 Bombardier Groomer
Porcupine Trail Blasters	Porcupine Plaine	1974 Unknown
Crossroad Sno-Diggers	Whitewood	1975 Bombardier SV301
Spiritwood Snowball Riders	Spiritwood	1975 SU 301 Groomer
Chitek Lake Bush Buddies	Chitek	1977 SV-252D Groomer
Duck Mountain Provincial Park (SERM)	Duck Mountain	1977 Tucker Sno-Cat
Esker Bear Inc	Choiceland	1977 Massey Ferguson 265 Groomer & Drag
Bjorkdale Stubble Jumpers	Bjorkdale	1980 Tucker Sno-Cat
Naicam Snowblasters	Naicam	1980 Snowcat Tucker 1342
Narrow Hills Provincial Park (SERM)	Narrow Hills	1980 Bombardier SV302HD Ski Dozer
Greenwater Lake Provincial Park (SERM)	Greenwater	1981 Bombardier SV302HD Ski Dozer
Kelvington Trail Blazers	Kelvington	1981 LMC 3700 Snowcar Groomer
Saskatoon Snowmobile Club	Saskatoon	1985 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Twin Lakes Trail Blazers	Nipawin	1985 Kazhuher PB200 Groomer
Northern Lights Snowmobile Club	Meadow Lake	1986 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Archerwill Drift Riders	Archerwill	1987 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Calling Lake Cruisers	Fort Qu'Appelle	1987 Tracker 4W
Moose Mountain Snowmobile Club	Windthorst	1989 240 Pisto Bully Groomer
Showstoppers Snowmobile Club	Melville	1989 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Weekes Bush Pushers Club	Weekes	1989 Track Truck Model 2800
Estevan Snowmobile Club	Estevan	1990 Case IH 855
SouthEast Sask Stubble Jumpers	Alida	1991 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Last Mountain Lake Drifters	Regina Beach	1992 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Battlefords Trail Breakers	Battlefords	1993 Unknown
Candle Lake Sno Drifters	Saskatoon	1994 BR Plus Bombardier Groomer
Tri-Valley Trails	Moosomin	1994 Trail Boss Groomer
Yorkton Sno-Riders	Yorkton	1994 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Yorkton Sno-Riders	Yorkton	1996 Marcel Trail Goomer Massey 399
Duck Mountain Grooming & Snowmobile Club	Kamsack	1997 Bombardier BR160 Groomer
Hudson Bay Trail Riders	Hudson Bay	1997 John Deere Groomer Model 6200
White Knucklers Snowmobile Club	Kindersley	1978 Bombardier SV2505
Border Explorers Snowmobile Club	Flin Flon	**Manitoba Groomer
Canwood Sno-Blazers	Canwood	1978 Bombardier 250V Ski Dozer
Lakeland Snowmobile Club	Christopher Lake	1989 BR400 Bombardier Groomer
Lintlaw Bush Bandits	Lintlaw	1974 Bombardier 250V Ski Dozer
Pasquia Snow Goers Club	Arborfield	**Contracted to Carrot River Operator
Rough Rider Snowmobile Club	Preeceville	1976 Tucker Sno-Cat
Parkland Snow Trackers	Shellbrook	1976 Bombardier 250V Ski Dozer

Source: SSA

Appendix 5: Trail Fund Point Assessment Elements

➢ Trail Fund Ad Hoc Committee, March 25, 2000

Purpose: The club point Assessment is quantified by four elements. Each assessment element is an identification of a significant, common, quantifiable factor that is a measurement of an operational demand placed on the Trail System. On element may be related to another element.

The purpose of each element is to, as equitably as possible, recognize and address variances between zones and clubs by assigning a value that represents a measurement of a particular club's position or relationship on the scale of that measurement.

Trail Use: This is a reasonable, quantifiable indicator of the amount of snowmobile traffic on a particular trail. i.e. The greater the amount of snowmobile traffic the greater the maintenance demand on the Trail System (and thereby the trail maintenance equipment), and the greater the financial demand on the club providing the trail maintenance equipment and trail maintenance activities.

Season Length: This is a reasonable, measurable indicator of the seasonal duration of trail maintenance requirements. i.e. The more weeks of snow, the more weeks of grooming required to maintain the Trail System, the greater the maintenance demand on the trail equipment, and the greater the financial demand on the club providing the trail maintenance equipment and trail maintenance activities.

Development Stage: This is a reasonable, quantifiable indicator of the quantity and type of trail maintenance equipment required to maintain the trail, the operational costs for the trail maintenance equipment, and the amount of trail signage required. i.e. The more undeveloped the Trail System, the greater the financial demand on the club providing the trail development activities.

Permits/Km: This is a reasonable, measurable indicator of the number of trail users. i.e. The more permits, the more users, the greater the financial demand on the club providing all aspects of the snowmobiling experience.

Element Profiles and Point Scores:

Trail Use	Low	1.0	Trails used by local riders and are seldom heavily travelled.
	Moderate Low	2.0	Riders are primarily local club members as well as riders for adjacent areas. Trails are often busy on weekends but are not well used during the week.

	Moderate High	3.0	Riders are attracted to the system from a broad zone are. Trails are very heavily travelled on weekends with some weekday travel in full season.
	High	4.0	This trail network is recognized as a major attraction by snowmobilers across the province. Trails are extremely busy on weekends and are often busy during the week.
Season Length	Low	2.0	The club provides at least 6 weeks of groomed trails in 3 out of 4 seasons.
	Moderate Low	3.0	The club provides at least 9 weeks of groomed trails in 3 out of 4 seasons.
	Moderate High	4.0	The club provides at least 12 weeks of groomed trails in 3 out of 4 seasons.
	High	5.0	The club provides at least 15 weeks of groomed trails in 3 out of 4 seasons.
Development	Low	0.5	The Trail System is fully developed. Minor amounts of tree removal, bulldozing, mowing, pick rocks and/or bridging is required primarily for repair or rerouting of established trails.
	Moderate Low	1.0	While the Trail System is essentially complete, substantial tree removal, bulldozing, mowing, pick rocks and/or bridging is still required primarily associated with upgrading of specific trail locations.
	Moderate High	1.5	Extensive tree removal, bulldozing, mowing, pick rocks and/or bridging is still required to complete this developing Trail System. Existing trails may require major upgrading. New trails are needed to complete the system.

	High	2.0	The Trail System is primarily undeveloped. The network has been laid out and tree removal, bulldozing, and/or bridging is just beginning. Most activity involves establishing new trails where none existed.
Permits	Low	0.5	The club sells 3 or more permits for each kilometre of trail it maintains.
	Moderate Low	1.0	The club sells at least 2 but less than 3 permits for each kilometre of trail it maintains.
	Moderate High	1.5	The club sells at least 1 but less than 2 permits for each kilometre of trail it maintains.
	High	2.0	The club sells less than 1 permit for each kilometre of trail it maintains.